GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5286
ANSWERED ON:28.04.2000
MILLENNIUM TALKS UNDER WTO
HARIBHAU MAHALE

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is participating in the Millennium talks under the World Trade Organisation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to present its case before the World Trade Organisation?

Answer

MINISTER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

(MURASOLI MARAN)

(a) and (b) India had participated in the Third Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO), sometimes also referred to as the `Millennium talks`, held at Seattle during 30th November-3rd December 1999.The Conference ended inconclusively without any Ministerial Declaration.

(c) Government have throughout been proactively projecting India`s own priorities before the World Trade Organisation (WTO). India has, inter alia, along with 11 other like minded group of countries, highlighted the urgent need to address the implementation issues under the following three broad categories;
(i) the existing imbalances and asymmetries in the existing WTO agreements as have been experienced since the coming into existence of WTO,
(ii) lack of sincere implementation of the existing WTO Agreements in their proper spirit by the developed countries, and
(iii) the need for effective operationalisation of the Special and Differential Treatment provisions for developing countries in the WTO Agreements by making them contractual binding obligations. India is specifically opposing the inclusion of any non-trade related issues like linkage of trade with core labour standards in the agenda of the WTO. India is also projecting its interests and concerns in the mandated negotiations under the Agreement on Agriculture and the General Agreement in Trade in Services, which have commenced on 1.1.2000 and also in the mandated reviews of the various WTO agreements such as those relating to Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs), Dispute Settlement Understanding, Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIMs Subsidies and Countervailing Duties, Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary Measures (SPS) etc.